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ABSTRACT

Effective school management requires managers who succeed in carrying out the organizational goals of their schools, utilizing the following leadership skills: planning (deciding how to accomplish the organization's goals); organizing (doing the necessary preparation); staffing (filling positions with the right people); directing (motivating staff so that goals are achieved); controlling (guiding the organization in the proper direction); and decision making (which underlies everything the manager accomplishes). The competent principal chooses a time frame that fits the planning agenda, and develops strategies to monitor progress. Meetings should be well-planned, and time management strategies should be applied in order to achieve appropriate delegation of tasks. Leadership is a basic part of management, and loyalty and respect are gained through merit. Four attributes of a successful school principal are intelligence, expression and image, leadership and management ability, and "guts." (MD)

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WHAT IS EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

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WHAT IS EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Let me attempt to give you what the researchers say and what my own personal experiences have taught me about Effective School Management.

THE MANAGER AND THE FUNCTIONS

Just what is a manager? A manager is a person who "gets things done through other people."

While the term manager has connotations associated with profit-making organizations, it is clear that managers exist in all kinds of organizations. It does not matter whether an individual is called hospital administrator, police chief, principal, or superintendent - the individual is filling the position of a manager. In the broadest sense, the manager is responsible for carrying out those activities needed for reaching the organizational goals. More specifically, the manager performs certain basic functions to get things done. These functions are (1) planning, (2) organizing, (3) staffing, (4) directing and (5) controlling.

PLANNING

Planning involves decisions about how the organization is to accomplish its goals. This includes deciding what is to be done, how it is to be done, and when and by whom it is to be done.

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ORGANIZING

Organizing involves the preparations necessary for implementing plans. The manager must decide the jobs to be performed and then determine who reports to whom in the organization. With jobs divided, it is important for some individuals to be in charge of coordinating the efforts of the members of the organization, and those people must be identified and the relation among them clearly defined.

STAFFING

Staffing involves filling the jobs of the organization with the right people, easier said than done. The proper staff, especially competent assistant principals and department chairpersons, are absolutely necessary to Effective School Management.

DIRECTING

Directing involves motivating and leading the members of the organization in such a way that the overall goals of the organization can be achieved. Besides achieving the organization's immediate goals, the manager, through leadership ability must motivate subordinates.

CONTROLLING

Controlling involves guiding the organization in the proper direction to accomplish its goals. This involves monitoring the activities of the organization and comparing them with organizational plans. If the plans and the actual performance of the organization are at odds, it is the manager's job to make the changes needed to match performances with plans.

You may wonder why decision making has not been included as one of the functions of the manager. Decision making is an important part of all managerial functions, and in fact, underlies everything the manager does. When you plan, you must decide about alternatives. When you organize, you must decide what type of organizational structure will

best suit the needs of the organization and applies to every of the aforementioned functions.

Planning is obviously not foolproof, if it were, Ford would never have developed the Edsel. Good plans go awry, but more studies on management point out, it is better to over plan than not to plan. When principals accept the idea of sound planning when you as the principal can begin to control your own destiny instead of being controlled by random events. The principal must honestly examine the management pool, the resources available, and all other factors that will bear on the success of the plan.

Finally a time frame must be considered. Management must choose a time frame that will allow for orderly progress of the plan. Strategies are then developed and specified to allow for monitoring. These are really the functions of the competent principal.

PLANNING FOR MEETINGS

Meetings are necessary for coordination and teamwork. However, meetings become longer than necessary if the meeting subject isn't sharply focused. Keep meeting length within reason by setting a time limit and developing a numbered agenda. Then, respect the limit and follow the agenda, which means firmly deferring unlisted items to the next meeting.

DO IT YOURSELF, OR DELEGATE? YOU CAN'T DO IT ALL!

A key way managers leverage time is by assigning planned activities to others and then supervising the progress. Delegation of work this way, and handling all of the resulting interpersonal dynamics is a specific managerial skill which must be cultivated. The decision of what you do yourself and what you delegate is an important time management decision.

Here are several guides that I have developed to help you avoid delegation errors:

1. Do delegate specific tasks that others whose time costs the organization less than yours, can do.

2. Do provide accurate instruction plus a target completion time or date.
3. Do short tasks yourself that cost more to delegate than for you to do.
4. Don't let the task be given back to you uncompleted without an acceptable reason. Reverse delegation is rarely excusable - but it's a common occurrence, and your own fault when it happens.
5. Don't let a delegated task be postponed. Periodically follow up each task you've delegated.
6. Don't over-supervise. Look for acceptable progress and results.

Harold Geneen - In his book Managing said and I quote:

"Management must manage"

" " "

"How Many Times Do I Have To Tell You!"

It is a very simple credo, probably the closest thing to the secret in business or educational administration, in almost everything you undertake. The strange thing is that in one form or another everyone knows it, and somehow they forget it all the time. Or they think it too simple to be real.

Manage - means to get something done, to accomplish something that you or your team set out to do, which presumably is worthy of your efforts.

Must means must. That is the active word in the credo "must."

LEADERSHIP

Leadership is the very heart and soul of the principalship. No one really manages a school by shuffling the numbers or rearranging organizational charts or applying the latest educational research formulas. What you manage in a school or a business is people. Respect and treat your people with dignity - Loyalty and respect are a two way street.

You gain both loyalty and respect the old fashioned way, "You Earn It".

SUMMARY ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP EFFECTING THE HIGH SCHOOL RESEARCH FOR BETTER SCHOOLS 1982 REPORT

Strong, focused, supportive administrative leadership is a precondition for any degree of effectiveness in a school. That is, it almost goes without saying that a strong principal makes a critical difference. Most of our suggested approaches to school improvement can only be instituted with the guidance and support of strong, committed and dedicated administrative leadership.

The research also says that effective schools have four key elements:

1. HIGH EXPECTATIONS
2. PARENT PARTICIPATION
3. SAFE, ORDERLY, DISCIPLINED SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
4. SMALL TEACHER/STUDENT RATIOS

THE PRINCIPAL - DIPLOMACY

Four attributes of a successful high school principal are:

Intelligence - not necessarily brilliance but you've got to have a questioning mind and reasonable intelligence.

Expression & Image - the ability to be able to express yourself well, both in writing and orally. Command presence.

Leadership & Managerial Ability - the ability to get people to believe in what it is you are doing and then lead them to accomplish the mission.

These three attributes are essential to success, but by no means guarantee it. The missing attribute in my opinion is "Guts". And if you don't have that in the last analysis you're not a success and everyone knows it.

By "Guts" I mean the willingness to tell your superiors that you think they are wrong and why. The willingness to say that to a Board of Education or State Commissioner. The willingness to tell people what you think, even if that will hurt your career.

Now at the same time you also must have the guts, after you had your day in court and lost to salute and march off smartly and do what you're directed to. I don't consider it guts to then persist in the argument. You can't run any good system that way. So you've got to be prepared to do things you don't necessarily believe in unless they are so morally abhorrent that you can't. Then under those circumstances you should consider resigning. Remember "No Guts No Glory".

Words are words, explanations are explanations, promises are promises - but only performance is reality. Performance alone is the best measure of your confidence, competence, and courage. Only performance gives you the freedom to grow as yourself.

Just remember that: Performance is your reality. Forget everything else. That is why my definition of a manager is extended to include this statement:

One who turns in the performance. No alibis to others or to one's self will change that. And when you have performed well, your district, the state, the kids, the world for that matter will remember it, when everything else is forgotten. And most importantly, so will you.

And always remember that no matter how good a job you did last year or for that matter the last twenty years. You are only as good as your performance this year.

It's a short walk from the hallelulah to the hoot!

Good Luck and Good Performance! And thank you for your attention. You have been a superior audience and I enjoyed your company.